United Nations S/PRST/2016/10

Security Council

Distr.: General
22 July 2016

Original: English

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 7742nd meeting of the Security Council, held on 22 July 2016, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls all its previous resolutions and the statements of its President on the situation in Lebanon. The Security Council reaffirms its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence of Lebanon.

"The Security Council stresses that the election of a President, the formation of a unity government and the election of a parliament by May 2017 are critical for Lebanon's stability and resilience to withstand regional challenges.

"The Security Council underscores in this regard in the strongest possible terms its deepest concern over the two-year-long vacancy in the presidency of Lebanon since the expiration of the mandate of former President Michel Sleiman on 24 May 2014. The Security Council further expresses deep concern at the Parliament's repeated inability to form a quorum and elect a President. The Security Council underlines that this prolonged vacancy has led to blockages in the Council of Ministers and rendered the Parliament incapable of passing critical legislation. The Security Council further stresses that the vacancy and the resulting political paralysis seriously impair Lebanon's ability to address the growing security, economic, social and humanitarian challenges facing the country.

"The Security Council urges Lebanese leaders to adhere to Lebanon's Constitution and National Pact and calls on all parties to act responsibly, put Lebanon's stability and national interests ahead of partisan politics and show the necessary flexibility and sense of urgency to apply mechanisms provided for by the Lebanese Constitution with regard to the election.

"The Security Council reaffirms its call on all Lebanese leaders to act with leadership and flexibility to convene urgently a parliamentary session and proceed to the election of a President. The Security Council calls on all Lebanese parties, including in the Parliament, to apply mechanisms provided for by the Lebanese Constitution with regard to the presidential election. The Security Council further calls on all parties to engage in negotiating a

Please recycle

compromise agreement with the aim of ending the political and institutional crisis in Lebanon.

"The Security Council welcomes the efforts of Prime Minister Tammam Salam to govern under increasingly difficult circumstances and calls on all parties in Lebanon to enable the Government to function effectively. The Council is, however, deeply concerned about the inability of the Government to take key decisions and calls on the political leadership in Lebanon to stand together in the national interest despite their political differences.

"The Security Council also commended the Government of Lebanon for the timely holding of local elections and further encouraged the Lebanese authorities to move ahead within the set calendar for the next legislative elections.

"The Security Council encourages all parties in Lebanon to demonstrate renewed unity and determination to resist a slide into violence and conflict. The Council stresses the importance of enhanced messages of moderation by Lebanon's leaders, including intensified dialogues and calls to defuse sectarian tensions.

"The Security Council condemns in the strongest terms acts of terrorism on Lebanese territory, and commends the Lebanese Armed and Security Forces for their commitment and critical role played in preventing and combating terrorism within Lebanon. The members of the Security Council reiterated in this regard their call for the continuation of international support for the Lebanese Armed Forces through additional and expedited assistance in areas where the Lebanese Armed Forces are most critically in need of support, including counterterrorism and border protection.

"The Security Council underscores its previous calls on all Lebanese parties to recommit to Lebanon's policy of dissociation and to cease any involvement in the Syrian crisis, consistent with their commitment in the ministerial declaration of the current Government and in the Baabda Declaration of 12 June 2012.

"The Security Council affirms that the preservation of Lebanon's stability is essential to regional stability and security. It encourages regional partners to engage constructively in resolving the presidential vacancy and preventing the spill-over of regional crises into Lebanon, and it encourages the international community to continue supporting Lebanon's political and economic stability, including through the continued provision of assistance.

"The Security Council is in this regard gravely concerned by the impact of hosting over 1,000,000 Syrian refugees registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Lebanon, which represents more refugees per capita than any other country, and its impact on host communities, on the stability and security of Lebanon and the wider region. The Security Council underscores that support to Lebanon's efforts to manage the impact of the influx of refugees, including on essential services such as education and health, is crucial to preserving Lebanon's stability and security. The Council acknowledges the extraordinary challenges Lebanon and the Lebanese people continue to face in this regard and Lebanon's efforts to host,

assist and protect those refugees and the importance of upholding human rights and humanitarian principles.

"In this regard, the Security Council commends the Statement of Intent presented by Lebanon at the Supporting Syria and the Region Conference in February 2016 and encourages its full implementation to support Lebanon's stability. The Security Council in this regard commends donors for their disbursement of funds to date and calls on others to fulfill their pledges of support.

"The Security Council expresses its appreciation for the International Support Group for Lebanon and urges the Group to continue its work in coordination with the Special Coordinator to seek opportunities to help address rising challenges to Lebanon's security and stability. It welcomes the proposal made by the President of France on 16 April 2016 in Beirut, Lebanon to organize a ministerial meeting of the International Support Group for Lebanon. The Security Council encourages the Special Coordinator for Lebanon, in the context of her good offices role and in close coordination with the ISG members, to conduct intensified contacts with Lebanon's partners, to convey the above messages, and engage key national and regional stakeholders with the aim of helping Lebanon towards a solution to the presidential vacancy. The Security Council further requests the Secretary-General to provide updates on the presidential vacancy and its impact on Lebanese institutions in subsequent reports on Lebanon."